

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of all grounds of rejection are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks. Claims 1, 2, 4-9 and 11-16 were rejected. Claims 6 and 7 were identified as allowable if rewritten to be in independent form. By entry of this amendment, claims 1, 7, 13 and 14 have been amended, claims 5, 6, 9, 12, 15 and 16 have been cancelled, and no new claims have been added. Consequently, claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 11, 13 and 14 are pending in this application. No new matter has been added.

In the Drawings

The Examiner has objected to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a). Specifically, the Examiner has objected to the drawings for not showing every limitation recited in Claim 12. In response, claim 12 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore, this objection is now moot.

In the Specification

The Examiner has objected to several informalities in the specification. The Applicant has appropriately corrected these informalities with the submission of new replacement paragraphs. Therefore, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 USC § 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 8 and 11-16 were rejected as being unpatentable over Gere et al. (US 5,590,617), in view of Roycroft et al. (US 6,796,856), and further in view of Caserta et al. (US 5,727,494).

In order to place this application in condition for allowance, the claims have been amended without prejudice or disclaimer. Independent claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of objected to claims 5 and 6. Claims 9, 12, 15 and 16 are cancelled without

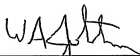
prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore, reconsideration is respectfully requested in regard to independent claim 1. Further, remaining claims 2, 4, 7, 8, 11, 13 and 14 are allowable at least based on direct or indirect dependence from claim 1. Consequently, any and all rejections regarding these claims are now moot.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims of this application are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims of this application is respectfully solicited. Furthermore, if the Examiner believes that additional discussions or information might advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

Date:

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